

**TRUE BLUE, THE  
ADVENTURES OF  
MEL, NED, AND JIM**

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True blue, the adventures of Mel, Ned, and Jim by T. E. Grattan-Smith

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**T. E. GRATTAN-SMITH**

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# TRUE BLUE

THE ADVENTURES OF  
MEL NED AND JIM

BY  
T. E. GRATTAN-SMITH



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1920

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# CONTENTS

CHAPTER	PAGE
I. THE BIRTHDAY PRESENT.....	1
II. AN IMPORTANT FIND.....	9
III. THE CHALLENGE.....	23
IV. A HAIRBREADTH ESCAPE.....	30
V. THE GERMAN SPIES.....	42
VI. EXIT THE BANDICOOT.....	51
VII. OLD NED.....	68
VIII. NED AND JIM TAKE A MOTOR TRIP.....	77
IX. THE ATTACK ON THE CAMP.....	84
X. FOILED AGAIN!.....	106
XI. THE TRAGEDY AT SEA.....	121
XII. MEL TAKES AN UNEXPECTED TRIP.....	126
XIII. INTRODUCING MR. RAMSEY.....	136
XIV. MEL ACCEPTS A JOB.....	140
XV. IN WHICH WE MEET A PIERNOLOGIST.....	145
XVI. THE CATASTROPHE.....	156
XVII. YOUNG JANSEN'S LITTLE GAME.....	163
XVIII. THE BOOBY TRAP.....	171
XIX. THE CARNIVAL.....	178
XX. A QUEER CUSTOMER.....	185
XXI. A PICNIC PARTY AND A BARGAIN SALE.....	195
XXII. THE SURF-BOAT.....	206
XXIII. THE SEA-GULLS.....	216
XXIV. MEL TAKES A HAND.....	221
XXV. THE CHASE.....	227
XXVI. THE FIGHT.....	235
XXVII. THE RESCUE.....	242
XXVIII. ANDY MAKES SOUP.....	245
XXIX. MEL'S BIRTHDAY PARTY.....	249

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## CHAPTER I

### THE BIRTHDAY PRESENT

**M**Y word, she can travel! I wonder how she will take the turn? Round she goes, right on her heel, the beauty! What wouldn't I give to have a flyer like her?"

The boy, whose enthusiasm had been aroused by the boat's splendid performance, gave a sigh. "No such luck for me," he said, turning to his chum. "I'll have to be content with a little one-horse two-stroke for the birthday present Dad promised me if I pulled off the Double-Dux of the School and All Schools' Swimming Championship. Well, I collared them both, and as Dad never breaks his word, I bet it's the little one-horse for me to-morrow."

Ned Grattan, the speaker, like his chum, Jim Stanley, was an Australian boy. Born of an Irish father and an English mother, he inherited the characteristics of both races, being warm-hearted, quick-tempered, and ever ready to forget an injury. He had grit and determination written on his face, and strength in every action of his body. Tanned brown, only a few shades lighter than an Islander,

from exposure to the sun of the beaches, he was, and looked no different from thousands of other Australian boys of sixteen, who, living in the open air, leading clean and healthy lives, become at this early age strong, well developed, mentally and physically, and capable of holding their own and a little more against all comers. Ned Grattan could ride a surf-board like an Islander, although only a few weeks had elapsed since the first exhibition of surf-board riding had been given by Khanamaku, the world's fastest swimmer. Ned was not the only boy who had mastered the surf-board. Before the summer had ended, the ocean rollers were ridden as they had never been ridden before, and the great white horses of the old Pacific shook their manes and raced shoreward with sun-brown surfers, riding them all out to a finish. Gallant deeds and actions of self-sacrifice were so frequently performed that the saving of life, or lives, from the treacherous undertow went unrewarded and unnoticed except, perhaps, for a clasp of the hand and a heartfelt "Thank you" from the rescued. It became a point of honour never to mention a risk taken, and a surfer who was unfortunate enough to receive a medal for a gallant action carefully hid it away and kept 'mum.'

Such was the calibre of the boys of the beaches, the crews of the famous eighteen-footers and the average clean, sport-loving Australian. Ned Grattan